

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 487

INFO AMCONSUL BOMBAY

AMCONSUL CALCUTTA

AMCONSUL MADRAS

C O N F I D E N T I A L NEW DELHI 10696

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, IN, US

SUBJECT: PRIME MINISTER RENEWS HER ATTACK ON WESTERN CRITICS

REF: NEW DELHI 9446

1. SPEAKING TO MANAGEMENT AND LABOR LEADERS OF THE NATION'S PORTS ON AUGUST 6, MRS. GANDHI ONCE AGAIN SOUGHT TO ARGUE THAT THE PROCLAMATION OF THE STATE OF EMERGENCY DID NOT MEAN THE ABANDONMENT OF DEMOCRACY. IN SO DOING, SHE AGAIN HARPED ON A FAVORITE THEME: HER CRITICS IN THE WEST ARE HYPOCRITICAL IN "SHEDDING TEARS" ABOUT THE FATE OF INDIAN DEMOCRACY.

2. FOLLOWING ARE THE PERTINENT PARTS OF HER REMARKS AS QUOTED IN THE PRESS AUGUST 7:

"TODAY WE ARE VERY MUCH IN THE BAD BOOKS OF MOST WESTERN COUNTRIES. THEIR PRESS SPECIALLY HAS BEEN CRITICISING US. BUT WHEN WE HAD THE 10 MILLION REFUGEES FROM BANGLADESH AND WE WERE THE MOST OPEN SOCIETY IN THE WORLD, NOBODY THEN SAID THAT OUR DEMOCRACY SHOULD BE HELPED. IN FACT IT WAS IN THAT PERIOD WHEN SOME OF THESE VERY WESTERN COUNTRIES STOPPED THEIR HELP TO US, NOT HELP OF ANY KIND OF WEAPONARY OR THINGS NEEDED FOR THE

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WAR, BUT ORDINARY ECONOMIC HELP. AND MANY OF THESE VERY COUN-

TRIES GAVE FULL MORAL SUPPORT TO THE AUTHORITARIAN REGIME IN PAKISTAN.

"WE KNOW THAT EVEN TODAY SOME COUNTRIES WHICH ARE CRITICISING US ARE STILL GIVING MORAL AND MATERIAL HELP TO THE MOST AUTHORITARIAN REGIMES IN AFRICA AND ASIA. THERE IS PRAISE FOR COUNTRIES WHICH HAVE NO BELIEF AND HAVE NEVER CLAIMED TO BELIEVE IN DEMOCRACY. AND WE ARE TOLD THAT THESE COUNTRIES HAVE SOLVED THEIR PROBLEMS, THEY ARE GIVING A BETTER DEAL TO THEIR PEOPLE. IN FACT, RIGHT UP TO A MONTH AGO WE WERE TOLD THAT DEMOCRACY WOULD NOT WORK IN INDIA. ALL OF THEM TODAY ARE SHEDDING TEARS THAT DEMOCRACY IS IN DANGER HERE.

"OBVIOUSLY, IT IS NOT A GOOD THING TO IMPRISON PEOPLE. IT IS NOT A GOOD THING TO HAVE CENSORSHIP. BUT WE MUST REALISE THAT LIBERTY, OR ANY KIND OF RIGHT, WHICH THE CONSTITUTION GIVES OR DEMOCRACY GIVES, CAN NEVER BE A PRIVILEGE WITHOUT ITS CORRESPONDING RESPONSIBILITY AND OBLIGATION. NOW WHAT HAD HAPPENED IN INDIA WAS THAT EVERYBODY WAS FOR RIGHTS BUT NOBODY WAS FOR RESPONSIBILITY AND OBLIGATION, WHETHER IT WAS THE WORKER OR THE FARMER OR ANY SECTION OR MANY OF OUR POLITICAL PARTIES.

"I THINK PROF. GALBRAITH IN ONE OF HIS BOOKS HAS SAID THAT DEMOCRACY IN INDIA IS A TYPE OF FUNCTIONING ANARCHY. WE CANNOT HAVE PROGRESS AND ANARCHY TOGETHER AND THAT IS WHY CERTAIN STEPS HAD TO BE TAKEN."

3. COMMENT: AS WE NOTED IN THE REFTEL, MRS. GANDHI IN HER ATTITUDE TOWARD THE UNITED STATES IS LIKE AN ILL-FITTING WINDOW THAT RATTLES FROM LEFT TO RIGHT. IT IS CLEAR THAT SHE HAS CHOSEN NOT TO REPAIR THE NOISE.
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